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## To You Who Dread Home Management

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*Assuming the full responsibility of a baby as irresistible as Ronnie is just one of the many home management duties.*

by Nancy Baker

**D**OES your heart flip-flop everytime someone mentions the words "home management house?" Perhaps you've dreaded home management since your freshman year. Now that smouldering fear is approaching reality.

Don't cringe at the mere mention of the words anymore. Take it from the experiences of one who chewed fingernails and tossed nights over the same thoughts—well, almost! I lived in a home management house for 6 weeks—and loved it.

The tormenting thought of home management lurked in the back of my head for 3 years. I was dead certain that it would be the course that would spoil a perfectly wonderful college education. I knew the day I walked in the door of a home management house, I would be in prison, scrubbing floors, sweating over food preparation and dodging a brow-beating advisor for 6 weeks. The more I thought about the course, the more frightening it became.

I stalked into Alice Norton House this summer. I felt as if I had just taken a leave of absence from all other living for the next few weeks. I prepared for the ultimate in drudgery and unhappiness. But I was surprised.

My reluctant-dragon attitude soon melted when I walked into a living room where I saw six women who looked rather peaked and also anticipating the

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worst. I guess I wasn't the only one who felt that way. Sitting at the other end of the room was the advisor, friendly, happy and even looking a little concerned herself.

It didn't take me long to realize that this home management course was not inserted as a thorn into the curriculum—to prick and to plague you throughout your 4 college years. The home economics faculty had definite reasons for including this type of course, and sound ones, I might add. You might describe home management living as a type of proving ground. That is, this is the opportunity to use all the knowledge you've been storing away for the past 3 years. For most of you, this will be your first full responsibility for common, everyday living situations and problems that will occur in your home.

It's up to you what you get out of home management living. You may not be aware of it at the time, but you are learning other things besides cooking and bathing the baby. You are absorbing knowledge of time management and work simplification methods. And if you don't know how to make use of better methods before you enter, by the end of the 6 weeks period you'll be a master at such accomplishments.

## *Eye-Opening Experience*

Maybe you're a sorority woman, all wrapped up in your own little community of 60 women; you've been out of your freshman dormitory for 2 years. Suddenly you find yourself thrown in with women you have never seen nor heard of before. It's an eye-opening experience. Whether you are a dormitory or sorority woman, you'll have to start from scratch on this getting-acquainted idea.

You can see that you have a lot of other things to master beside culinary accomplishments. You'll learn to live and work with others. You'll polish up on the art of cooperation, a quality which enters the picture as most important for harmonious and happy living.

You'll be exposed to the give and take of home managing. And sometimes you may think you're giving more than you're taking. Reason it out this way: regardless of where you live, there are pleasant and unpleasant tasks to do. You'll soon be doing all types with speed and efficiency.

When you have fulfilled all prerequisite requirements including courses and credit hours, you're eligible to enter home management. This will be done during your senior year and entrance is by reservation only. These should be made with your senior college counselors. You'll draw for your house a few weeks before entering. And you can figure right now you won't be in with a sorority sister or another person in your dormitory. Whenever possible, the women from the same residences are scattered through different houses.

About a week before you enter, you'll be invited by members of the house to supper or some sort of

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party. At this time you may ask questions about any phase of home management life or any problems troubling you. Somewhere along in the evening your own group finds time to hold a preliminary meeting with the advisor. You decide the various responsibilities, which depend upon the number of women in the house. When we were entertained, the first cook and child director were selected. It was necessary for them to meet with the present cook and child director to observe how to bathe the baby, make formula, and familiarize themselves with the kitchen arrangement.

In our group there were seven duties; each one lasted 5 days. At the first house meeting you'll decide what duties the responsibilities should include. It's up to the group to decide—who cleans the front porch, should we clean our own rooms and in what sequence the jobs will follow. These questions and many others will keep popping up the first few days. Regular house meetings were scheduled for Monday evenings; sometimes informal discussions followed lunch.

Our major duties were assistant cook, cook, manager, laundress, assistant child director, child director, upstairs housekeeper and downstairs housekeeper. There may be more duties than these, depending on the number of women in the house. Together we worked out what our duties would include. Our plans were flexible enough to include any changes that would improve the setup. Although the duties vary from group to group, you'll be interested in what the different types of jobs in our group included.

The assistant cook's duties consisted of setting the table, replenishing the table during meals, helping the cook with minor food preparations and washing dishes. Her major planning involved time management to fit in with the cook's schedule.

## *Big Appetites*

The job of cook is probably the most time consuming, but also the most fun. You'll find plenty of big appetites in the house and you'll have a grand time trying out new recipes or those specialties handed down by your mother. The cook plans and prepares all the meals and does the marketing for food and supplies.

You'll really learn to manage your time, by means of dove-tailing, doing several preparations at once and working during the evening while you're studying. And you'll find getting lunch ready by 12:15 when you have classes from 8 until 12 can be easy, if you work out your plans in advance. If you buy with an eye on the price, that 70 cent allotment won't be hard to obey—it's amazing.

Our manager kept the books and acted as dining room hostess. The bookkeeping included such work as checking inventory with the preceding cook, managing the petty cash fund, keeping a daily journal of all bills, writing checks and paying bills and having the books checked by the college auditors. As hostess, she greeted all guests at the door and planned some type of weekly entertainment for the group.

Planning and care of the linens was the responsibility of the laundress. In our group she washed table mats, napkins and tea towels. She usually worked out the system of washing every other day, and ironing on the days inbetween. All sheets, towels, and table cloths are sent to the college laundry and it is her responsibility to check the laundry in and out once a week.

Helping the child director in any way possible was the main duty of the assistant child director. This may be taking the baby for a walk or assisting with the bath. Although in some groups the laundress does the baby's wash, in our house the assistant child director assumed this responsibility.

If you have never had the opportunity to handle a baby, here's your big moment. For all responsibility and fun is loaded on your shoulders for several days when you become director. However, all is not play while being child director. As any mother would be, you'll find yourself plenty tied down while taking care of the baby. It's a 24 hour responsibility but you'll love every minute of it. Your jobs will be making formula, feeding the baby, taking care of her or planning for others to take charge of her during her waking hours.

## *Housekeepers' Duties*

The housekeepers' duties are to keep the house neat and presentable at all times. It is up to the individuals to work out their own cleaning schedules, always with the privilege of discussing any questions with the advisor.

You are not required to do your work at a certain time each day, with the exception of the cook who must have meals ready by a certain established time, and the child director, who has a regular schedule to follow. The system is flexible enough so that you are able to plan your work, study and play time to the best advantage for all.

Each group as a whole plans and carries out some sort of project during their home management period. For example, one spring quarter several groups planted gardens and the residents in the following session canned the surplus vegetable products. Other groups have made bedspreads and curtains. Each woman makes an individual contribution to the houses. This may be making ironing board covers, a house scrapbook or napkin holders.

There is always time for entertainment. It's the usual procedure for each manager to plan some entertainment during the week. Sometimes the parties are given by several women together. You don't have to stick to a stiff pomp-and-circumstance theme.

Home management is not an obstacle course designed to test your strength of endurance. After that first week of getting acquainted and adjusted, you'll soon realize the wonderful experiences and opportunities of living within reach of your brain and fingertips.